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9 JAN 1957

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DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR INTERVALS; NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED. DOD DIR 5200.10.

Mr. R. E. Gradle
Government Communications Manager
American Telephone and Telegraph Company
801 Nineteenth Street, N. W.
Washington 6, D. C.

~~DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR INTERVALS; NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS. DOD DIR 5200.10.~~

Dear Mr. Gradle:

The Air Research and Development Command, through its Ballistic Missile Division, recently negotiated with the AT&T Long Lines, associated companies and other independent communications carriers for communications in support of the Sentry project. This project presently is assigned a national priority precedence of 1-1, and the need for extremely reliable and instantaneous communications is established as a critical and vital support requirement.

Since all efforts in the execution of this project are of a research and development nature, future communications requirements will depend upon the results of the initial flight tests. Successful tests in the initial stages will, of course, result in firmer future requirements.

As you are no doubt aware, reliability of the communications complex has caused considerable concern of late. Any failure in our communications complex could very well result in a complete failure of the entire effort. I am sure you are aware of this concern and will continue to aid whenever possible.

Assistance in resolving present problems is being and has been rendered by your very competent officials. Considerable help was given us by your Mr. Coy Mercer, Mr. Charles Davis of AT&T Long Lines, and Mr. Dale Tomhave of PT&T on their recent visit to our Field Office at Palo Alto, and also the trip to the Alaskan sites indicates the efforts your companies are expending to provide good service.

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I wish to express my personal appreciation for the cooperation rendered to date, and to assure you that the greatest amount of confidence is placed in you and your people in this important project.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

O. J. RITLAND
Brig. Gen., USAF
Vice Commander